DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 055 590 JC 710 255

AUTHOR Henning, Michael B.
TITLE PERT Application: Formation of an Advisory Committee at the Community College.
PUB DATE 71
NOTE 21p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Advisory Committees; Committees; Community Action; Critical Path Method; *Junior Colleges; Planning; *Program Development; *Program Planning; Sequential Approach; Vocational Development; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS PERT; Program Evaluation and Review Technique

ABSTRACT

This paper suggests that, before a new occupational program is offered in a community college, an advisory committee be formed to help set standards for equipment and the instructional program. The management device known as Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT), would be useful both for the establishment of this advisory committee and for guidance through its subsequent meetings. A PERT network should be developed to cover the time from when the need for a program is felt until the advisory committee and program prospectus are established. This paper presents a model for the application of PERT to the establishment of the advisory committee. Events and the sequence of necessary planning are pinpointed and could easily be applied to actual situations. (MN)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED055590

PERT Application: Formation Of An Advisory Committee

At The Community College

Michael B. Henning
Erie Community College
Buffalo, New York
1971

I PERT Principles

II Advisory Committee

III PERT Application

JC 710 255

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES
DEC 8 1971
CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

PERT Application: Formation Of An Advisory Committee At The Community College

The growth of community colleges in the United States is phenomenal. New community colleges are mushrooming up throughout our nation while the existing ones are increasing the number of new occupational programs in their offerings. This growth can mean only one thing - a great many new lay advisory committees must be established.

Long before the new program is ready to accept students an advisory committee must be formed in order to "...help set up standards for equipment and instructional program". (1)

The occupational deans who will have the task of establishing and making lay advisory committees functional may find the management technique, PERT, useful both for the establi shment of tne advisory committee and its guidance through the meeting.

PERT Principles

The Special Projects Office of the Navy Department developed Project Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) in 1958 as a system which was designed to provide for more effective project control in the development of the Polaris Ballistic Missile. Due to the success of this system, PERT since has been applied to a number of diverse projects not excluding some in the educational field.

PERT is used to both organize and control a project having an overall objective or goal, which in our case is the establishment of a community college advisory committee and the guidance of the advisory committee through the first meeting.

The development of a PERT system is based upon the network - "...the graphic representation of the project plan", (2) in which the components are events and activities.

Events in the network are depicted by circles and represent the start or completion of a task. They are points in time (milestones) which do not consume time, energy, resources or personnel.

An activity is, as its name implies, the work of the project involving, time, resources, personnel, etc. "An

activity consists of the work process leading from one event to another"(3) and is depicted by a solid line arrow. The network also contains 'dummy activities' which do not consume time or resources but are necessary to keep the network as descriptive as possible. Since they do not expend time or resources they are depicted by dotted line arrows.

The construction of the network requires the statement of the project objective (which we are clear on) and "...the placing of project work units in their logical order. Supporting events and activities may then be added to form the network". (4) It must be understood in network construction that activities and events may be dependent upon one or a number of events or activities before they can take place thus giving rise to parallel, burst, merge and concurrent activity constructions.

Networks, once constructed, can have time estimates assigned to each activity in order to make predictions when events will occur and the project will be completed. When a target date for project completion has been established, as may be the case in the establishment of an advisory committee, the amount of time spent on each activity can be determined in order to bring the project to completion on target.

The time aspect of PERT will not be figured into this network system since administrators hold divergent philosophies

as to how far in advance to the actual accepting of students for a new curriculum that the establishment of an advisory committee should take place. My feeling is that it should be established approximately one year in advance to the door being opened for students.

The Advisory Committee

The world of work is not stationary - it is in a dynamic whirlpool of change. Occupations are being eliminated, phased out and/or changed; therefore, it makes sense that programs designed to educate people for the work world should also be eliminated, phased ou and/or changed. A school or educational system continuing to offer an occupational program(s) which does not meet the needs of the work world could not be considered a viable educational instrument. More importantly, the individuals whom this type system purports to help, namely the students, are the same individuals who are being aided the least since they are being educated for something which does not exist.

Occupational programs, whether at the secondary school or community college level, are more vulnurable to becoming outdated than are the academic programs offered by these institutions. The changes occuring in occupations need to be brought to the attention of the administrators and faculty of the institution in order to incorporate them into occupational programs. It is a vain administrator who thinks that once a program is established it does not need to be tampered with or that he alone can keep abreast of tne direction the world of work is taking and singlehandedly make the necessary

changes in curricula, facilities, equipment, etc. It is an absolute necessity for an administrator to turn to those in the occupational world in order to establish or maintain an occupational program. The group to which an administrator would turn is known as an advisory committee.

"The practice of turning to advisory committees of lay citizens for assistance in conducting an educational program has been common in the field of vocational education throughout its history in the United States." (5) This committee does not usurp the occupational administrators' power of administration rather it exactly is as the name states - an advisory committee not an administrative body. "The main function(of the advisory committee) is to advise and counsel the educational system's staff in planning, implementing and maintaining vocational and technical programs. Some specific functions are:

1. Advise on curriculum
2. Advise on materials, facilities, and financing
3. Assist in securing local cooperation
4. Assist in community surveys
5. Assist in program evaluation
6. Assist in public relations." (6)

Samuel M. Burt sees the effectiveness of the involvement and participation of industrial representatives as the determinate of the effectiveness of the occupational program for de-

veloping manpower resources. (7) From the point of view of the manpower needs of the community (and the nation) effective use of an advisory committee is essential. No number of educational administrators can effectuate the advantages gained by the use of an advisory committee. A practical point to consider is that laymen "...will talk and they will evaluate, whether they are informed or not...", (8); therefore, they should be involved since education needs both public support and the input laymen can offer.

PERT Application

The PERT network was developed to facilitate an occupational dean in the establishment of an advisory committee. It contains a number of activities and events which will not be commented upon since I feel their place in the network is self-explanatory by an inspection of the network. There are other events which must be commented upon in order to make their place or function in the network understandable and it is with these that I will concern the remainder of this article.

This network is designed to begin when the occupational dean actively starts getting involved in the new program in terms of forming an advisory committee and searching for an administrator and teaching faculty for the new curriculum. Prior to this time he has been involved in the local study to determine whether there is a legitimate need for an occupational program in this field and geographical area. He was involved also in writing the prospectus of the new program which was submitted to the state department of education for approval. A PERT network could be developed to cover the time from when a need was felt for the new occupational program through the local study and the submission of the prospectus to the state department of education. A network of this nature would be the natural lead in to the

network developed in this project.

One of the first things the occupational dean must concern himself with is the development of an Advisory Committee Handbook. The Advisory Committee Handbook is an important tool in the orientation of the committee members about the community college, its programs and advisory committees, therefore, careful work should go into the planning of this manual (PERT 38). The Handbook should include such items as the philosophy of both the community college and community college advisory committees; a brief historical sketch of community colleges and in particular your own college. (9) A major portion of the Handbook should deal with the organization of the advisory committee, the duties of each of the members (10) and the policies by which it is to be governed.

After the department head has been appointed, he, together with the occupational dean, must decide on the size and character of the advisory committee before it is formed. The committee should be limited in the number of members"... - five to nine is an ideal size and makes a good working committee" (11), although larger odd numbered committees have been very effective. The benefits gained from a smaller or larger committee must be decided by the dean and the department head. When deciding on the committee size keep in mind that "one-third of the membership should be replaced each year". (12)

A decision also should be made to draw representatives "...from a cross section of organizations in the community and from several geographical areas in an attempt to achieve balance. They should also represent various levels within the industry". (13)

After the nature of the advisory committee has been decided upon (PERT 8) a search is begun (PERT 9 and 11) for advisory committee candidates. They should be selected "...on the basis of (1) experience (2) available time, and (3) character. They should be people who are interested in the activities with which the vocational program is concerned - employers and employees alike. "Success (of the committee) rests in the selection of the members." (14) In terms of the representation of the community on the advisory committee three groups should be considered "... - employers, organized labor, and the general public. It is usually best to have equal representation of employers and labor in the membership". (15)

Once the list of the candidates for the advisory committee is completed it should be checked by the college president (PERT 14) in order to eliminate any question over the appointment and the power to appoint advisory committee members. (16)

The president's approval of the advisory committe candidates is the preliminary approval before being presented to the Board of Trustees for their approval. Before this takes place

each candidate should be contacted to make sure he is still interested in serving on the committee and "the nature of the advisory committee service is discussed with (each) prospective committee member". (17) Also, since "the success of advisory committees is rooted in faith, empathy, and confidence, none of which are possible without the cooperation of industry and the college...an invitation to serve on a college advisory committee should have the approval of the (potential committee member's) superior". (18)

Once a candidate expresses his interest in serving as an advisory committee member and both his supervisor and the college president approve of his involvement, the recommendation of his appointment should be presented to the highest authority in the college - the Board of Trustees for their approval (PERT 19). "Appointment of college advisory groups should be an offical act of the junior college board of trustees... A letter of invitation to each prospective member, signed by either the chairman of the board or the president, should be sent. (PERT 21) This is important for the following reasons: (1) it helps set the stage for a harmonious working relationship; (2) it helps establish the source of authority as the junior college and industry representatives work together; and (3) the highest authority possible will lend prestige to the appointment and to the committee." (19)

Before the first advisory committee meeting is held, each member should be contacted by a college representative in order to spell out to him what the functions and the purposes of the committee are. (PERT 22) (20)

Simultaneously with the sending of the appointment letters and the calendar check for a possible committee meeting date (PERT 20), work on the agenda for the first meeting should begin (PERT 24). The agenda should include such items as a welcome from the college president (21) and/or chairman of the board of trustees; an introduction of all members; distribution of the Advisory Committee Handbook (22); the task, responsibilities and limitations of the advisory committee should again be made clear to the members (23) as well as a clear definition of what is expected of them as committee members"...in the way of advice, assistance, cooperation, money and time". (24) "Committee members snould understand that they are not expected to know all answers" (25); however, they need to be "...made to feel that they have an important role to play for the college". (26) The agenda should attempt to help members "...understand the scope of the...vocational program" (27) so they do not tend to think in terms of their own specific needs. The election of officers - chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary must be included for the effective operation of the initial

and future meetings. Two sub-committees must be established: one to study the curriculum and the other to study the facilities and equipment required by the inclusion of the new occupational program. The materials collected pertaining to the existing community colege occupational program should be sorted at this time for distribution at the first meeting to the members of the sub-committees. Finally, a date for the second advisorycommittee meeting is to be settled upon.

Notices of the advisory committee meeting with the announced agenda should be sent out early enough so each member can plan to attend. (28) These notices should be sent on official college stationary (PERT 27) (29) when the time, date and place of the meeting have been decided upon. (PERT 26)

Immediately following the advisory committee meeting, the chairman, secretary and college representative should take a few minutes to "...evaluate the proceedings in terms of improving working relationships with the advisory committee". (30) This evaluation"...highlights the tasks of subcommittees, the chairman, or the secretary resulting from the meeting, and should clarify doubtful or questionable items for the next agenda". (31)

If the first advisory meeting made any recommendations

they should be directed to the college administration, including the board of trustees,if necessary, for their action. (32) If no recommendations are generated at this initial meeting, this step would be overlooked until a later meeting.

The educational leaders of the college must be placed on the list for distribution of the minutes in order to keep them informed of the committee's activities. (33)

The actions of the advisory committee should be made known to the news media in the name of public relations. (34) This release would include the names and organizations of the members who make up the committee.

It is imperative that the selection and appointment of advisory committee members take place smoothly for all parties involved and that the first advisory committee meeting impress the advisory committee members with dispatch and democracy, thereby setting the stage for an efficient, effective and enthusiastic committee operation. The application of PERT to the formation of an advisory committee and its guidance through the first meeting will help insure this success as well as challenge the general feeling that the failure of an advisory committee to function usefully is due to the poor leadership provided by the community college.

PERT

Event Identification

1. Complete prospectus of new program submitted to State Department of Education for approval.
2. Complete program approval by State Department of Education.
3. Start search for Department Head.
4. Complete department head candidates' interviews with President and Dean.
5. Complete recommendation of President and Dean on candidate for department head.
6. Complete Board of Trustees approval on recommendation.
7. Complete department head appointment.
8. Complete decision on size and character of advisory committee.
9. Start search in the occupational area for advisory committee candidates.
10. Complete search in the occupational area for advisory committee candidates.
11. Start search in the community for advisory committee candidates.
12. Complete search in the community for advisory committee candidates.
13. Complete list of prospective advisory committee candidates.
14. Complete check of prospective advisory committee candidate list by President.

15. Complete finalcheck of advisory committee candidates to see if they are still interested in serving.

16. Complete securing supervisor's approval.

17. Start personal data forms on advisory committee candidates.

18. Complete personal data forms on advisory committee candidates.

19. Complete Board of Trustees approval of advisory committee candidates.

20. Complete President and Board of Trustees calendar check for date of first advisory committee meeting.

21. Complete sending of appointment letter.

22. Start orientation for advisory committee members.

23. Complete orientation for advisory committee members.

24. Start work on agenda of first advisory committee meeting.

25. Complete agenda of first advisory committee meeting.

26. Complete decision on the date, time and place of first meeting.

27. Complete sending announcement of first meeting.

28. Start meeting.

29. Complete meeting.

30. Complete revision and evaluation of meeting.

31. Complete giving advisory committee recommendations to college administration for action.

32. Complete distribution of minutes to leaders of the college.

33. Complete news media notification regarding advisory committee recommendations.

34. Complete securing President's approval to form advisory committee.

35. Complete securing Board of Trustees' approval to form advisory committee.

36. Start securing materials from institutions having existing programs in occupational area.

37. Complete securing materials from institutions having existing programs in occupational area.

38. Start research on advisory committees.

39. Complete research on advisory committees.

40. Start writing Advisory Committee Handbook.

41. Complete writing Advisory Committee Handbook.

42. Start search for teaching faculty.

43. Complete interviews of faculty applicants by Occupational Dean and Department Head.

44. Complete recommendation of faculty candidates to President.

45. Complete Presidential approval of recommended faculty.

46. Project End.

FOOTNOTES

1. Albert J. Riendeau, The Role of the Advisory Committee in Occupational Education (Washington: American Association of Junior Colleges, 1967), p. 33.
2. Desmond L. Cook, Program Evaluation and Review Technique Applications in Education (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1966) p. 11.
3. Ibid., p. 14.
4. Ibid.
5. Gerald B. Leighbody and William J. Small, Organization and Operation of a Local Program of Vocational Education (Columbus, Ohio: Instructional Materials Laboratory Trade and Industrial Education, The Ohio State University, 1968), p. 29.
6. Elroy E. Golden, "The Advisory Committee Links School and Community", Business Education Forum, XXIV No. 4 (January, 1970), 10.
7. Samuel M. Burt, Industry and Vocational-Technical Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967), p. 3.
8. Clayton E. Bull, "Roles of Lay and Professional Persons", The Bulletin of National Association of Secondary-School Principals, XLVII (October, 1963), 28-29.
9. Riendeau, op. cit., p. 36.
10. Ibid., pp. 69-72.
11. Golden, loc.cit.
12. Ibid.
13. Riendeau, op. cit., p. 34.
14. Golden, loc. cit.

15. Leighbody and Small, op. cit., p. 29.

16. Riendeau, op. cit., p. 35.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., p. 34.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., p. 36.

21. Ibid., p. 44.

22. Ibid., p. 45.

23. Leland R. Cooper, "The Use of Lay Advisory Committees in Junior College Programs", Adult Leadership, XVII No. 10 (April, 1969), 414.

24. Samuel M. Burt, "If I Were a Member of a Vocational Educational Committee", Industrial Arts and Vocational Education, LVII (February, 1968), 30.

25. Cooper, op. cit., p. 434.

26. Riendeau, loc. cit.

27. Arnold P. Ruskin, "Industry Cooperation: A Guide for Effective Involvement", Industrial Arts and Vocational Education, LVIII (November, 1969), 90.

28. Riendeau, op. cit., p. 46.

29. Ibid., p. 37.

30. Ibid., p. 52.

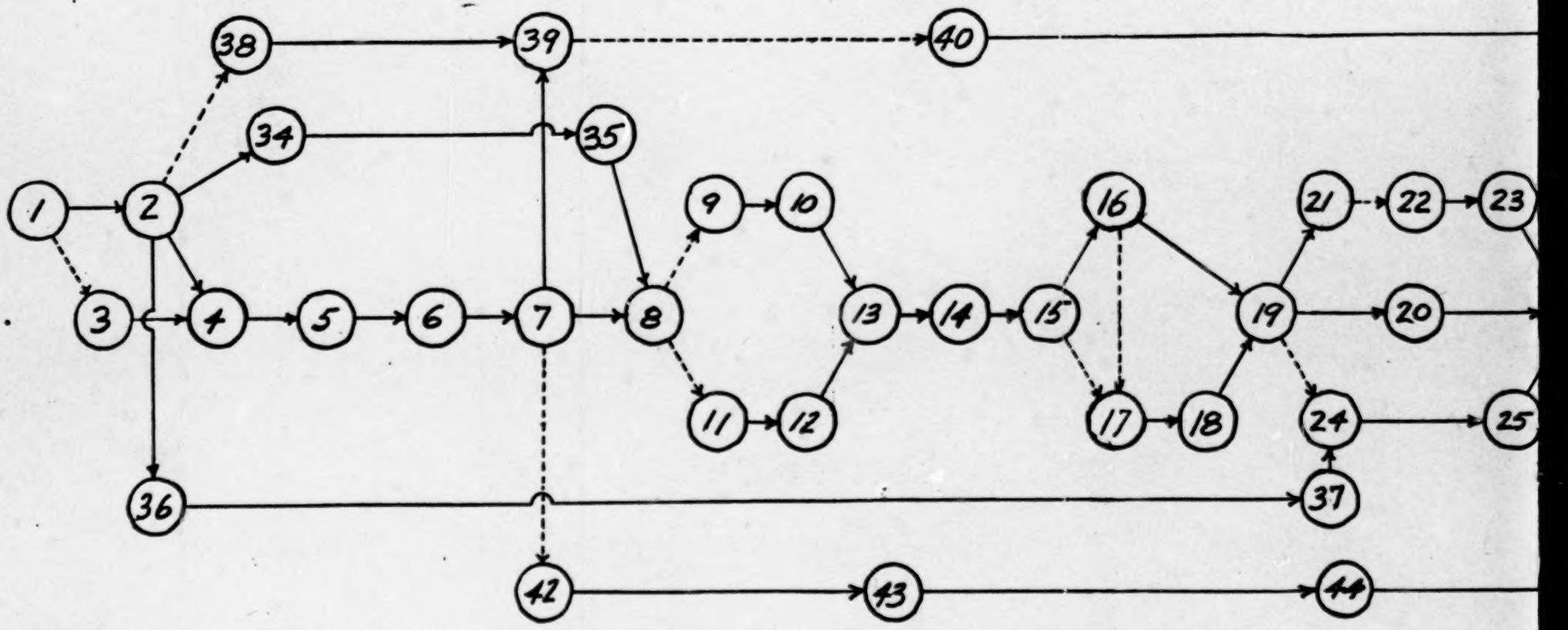
31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., p. 53.

33. Ibid., pp. 20-21.

34. Ibid., pp. 53-54.

PERT NETWORK



PERT NETWORK